



This Week in Lansing

MHSA • Muchmore Harrington Smalley & Associates, LLC

Highlights of the Latest Major Legislative, Administrative and Regulatory Activity in the State Capitol

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REPORT ON LINE 5 PIPELINE RELEASED: ALTERNATIVES NOTED – According to a report released to the public Thursday, recommendations for alternative options for *Enbridge Energy's Line 5 pipeline* (currently running underneath the *Straits of Mackinac*) should be considered. The report, commissioned by the *State* and compiled by *Dynamic Risk Assessment Systems, Inc.*, follows the basis of recommendations made by the *Pipeline Safety Advisory Board* roughly two years ago and outlines six different alternative solutions to the controversial pipeline. Before any action is taken, however, the report notes a risk assessment must be conducted to determine the possibility of an oil spill in the *Straits*.

The alternatives listed in the report are as follows:

- Construct a new pipeline that will not cross the *Great Lakes*
- Use an existing pipeline that does not currently cross the *Great Lakes*
- Use alternative transportation methods for the oil currently flowing through *Line 5*
- Replace the *Line 5* pipeline by building a tunnel for it to run through
- Maintain the existing *Line 5* pipeline as is
- Abandon/decommission the *Straits* portion of the *Line 5* pipeline

In response to the release of the report and its suggestions, *Attorney General Bill Schuette* noted that no matter the choice made, ultimately the pipeline must be decommissioned. *Mr. Schuette* also stated that until that is a viable choice, the *Legislature* should pass legislation to keep heavy and crude oil/tar sands out of *Line 5*. Commenting on the issue, *Mr. Schuette* stated, “The safety and security of our Great Lakes is etched in the DNA of every Michigan resident, and the final decision on Line 5 needs to include a discussion with those that rely on propane for heating their homes, and depend on the pipeline for employment. One thing is certain; the next steps we take should be for the long-term protection of the Great Lakes.”

According to *Dynamic Risk Assessment Systems, Inc.*, the report released Thursday is a draft, and welcomes public comment on the report, with the following dates set for public comment hearings:

- July 6, 5:00 p.m. at *Holt High School* (5885 Holt Road)
- July 24, 8:00 a.m. at *Holt High School* (5885 Holt Road)
- July 24, 6:00 p.m. at the *Hagerty Center, Northwestern Michigan College* (715 East Front Street, *Traverse City*)
- July 25, 6:00 p.m. at *Little Bear East Arena* (275 Marquette Street, *St. Ignace*)

The *State of Michigan's Line 5 Alternatives Report* can be viewed [here](#).

FARNUM BUILDING SALE BILL MOVES TO GOVERNOR – The *Michigan Department of Technology, Management and Budget (DTMB)* will assist the state in selling the previous home of *Senate* offices, the *Farnum Building*, under legislation passed by the *Senate* on Wednesday via a 26-9 vote. The legislation, *House Bill 4759*, calls for the allowance of the sale by the state in a public, competitive bid process so multiple bidders can participate and place the building back on the city’s tax roll. To complete the process, *DTMB* officials will need to first appraise the building and its adjoining parking lot, something the *City of Lansing* has not done as it is a state property (therefore, doesn’t pay city taxes).

Though no groups have expressed interest in the building as of yet, legislators agree the sale is necessary and a good move for the city, as it will bring more businesses to downtown and will also return state monies used for the move of *Senate* offices to the *Connie Binsfeld Building* (roughly \$7 million in total). *House* members unanimously approved the bill as introduced by *Representative Andy Schor* (D-Lansing), allowing the building to be sold at fair market value and avoiding its proposed costly renovations (estimated between \$11.5 and \$20 million). Beginning with the appraisal and ending with a review by the *State Administrative Board*, the entire sale process will take anywhere from four to six months. The bill is now headed to *Governor Rick Snyder* for signature.

MORE OPIOID BILLS MOVE THROUGH SENATE – The fight against the opioid epidemic in Michigan continued last week, with *Senate* members moving a seven-bill package addressing the issue and anticipating more legislation to come. The bills, as passed, call for the following:

- The prohibition of prescribing *Schedule 2-5* drugs without first running a check on the patient via the *Michigan Automated Prescription System (MAPS)* for opioid abuse (*Senate Bills 166 and 167*)
- The requirement of more prescribers to report via *MAPS* (*Senate Bill 47*)
- The requirement of physicians prescribing *Schedule 2-5* drugs to provide follow-up care to patients using those medications and to form a relationship with the patient before prescribing those medications in case other methods can be prescribed (*Senate Bill 270*)
- The requirement of any healthcare professional to provide opioid abuse information when treating an opioid-related overdose patient (*Senate Bill 273*)
- The limitation of seven-day usage for acute pain cases (wisdom teeth removal, sprained ankle, etc.) (*Senate Bill 274*)

Commenting on the passage of the bills, *Senate Health Policy Committee Chair Senator Mike Shirkey* (R-Clarklake) noted that local communities need to be involved in the effort as well, including improved education, assisting law enforcement entities and limiting the supply of the medications. The bills will now be sent to the *House* for discussion and voting.

AGREEMENT REACHED FOR DETROIT BRIDGE PROPERTY – City officials announced late last week an agreement between *Detroit*, state, federal, *Canadian* and community officials has been finalized, allowing for the purchase of housing properties near the proposed *Gordie Howe International Bridge U.S.* landing site. As a part of the agreement, the city will use \$23.6 million to purchase 240 new houses to relocate the residents from the affected properties, with the entire plan estimated to total roughly \$48 million. The properties in the new neighborhood (set to be located where the downriver *Detroit* anchorage of the bridge is to be placed) will then be sold to the *Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT)*, as will any underground assets and city streets in the neighborhoods.

Job training for residents in the new neighborhood will also be provided, so they can seek employment in the construction and ongoing operations of the bridge. Other community benefits will include air quality testing and health impact assessments. *Representative Stephanie Chang* (D-Detroit)

praised the agreement, noting the “huge victory” is “something residents have been fighting for more than a decade”. Final decisions on architect teams, construction teams, engineers, and the *U.S. Customs* plaza are expected to come in 2018.

ELECTION BUZZ

- **Dana Nessel**, a defense attorney from **Detroit**, has announced her bid for the position of **Attorney General**
- **Dr. Jim Hines** submitted 22,575 petition signatures for the gubernatorial election in 2018, making him the first candidate from either party to submit signatures for the race
- **Representative John Bizon** (R-Battle Creek) announced his campaign for the **19th Senate District** seat, currently held by term-limited **Senator Mike Nofs** (R-Battle Creek), setting up a **GOP** primary with former **Representative Mike Callton**
- **Kelly Rossman-McKinney** announced her bid for the **24th Senate District** seat, currently held by term-limited **Senator Rick Jones** (R-Grand Ledge)
- Former **State Representative Paul Wojno** announced his candidacy for the **9th Senate District** seat, currently held by term-limited **Senator Steve Bieda** (R-Warren)
- Former **Republican Supreme Court Justice Robert Young** announced his plans to run for the **U.S. Senate** in 2018, against current **Democratic U.S. Senator Debbie Stabenow**
- **Sally Williams** is set to succeed current **Elections Director Chris Thomas** (who is retiring after serving in the position for 36 years) in the coming weeks
- **Teri Banas**, current **Ingham County Commissioner**, announced her run for the **69th House District** seat in 2018, currently held by **House Minority Leader Sam Singh** (D-East Lansing)
- Current **Representative Jim Tedder** (R-Clarkston) announced he will run for the **12th Senate District** seat in 2018, currently held by term-limited **Senator Jim Marleau** (R-Lake Orion)

ODDS & ENDS

- **Governor Rick Snyder** vetoed this morning a bill establishing a “Choose Life” license plate, something that saw wide spread support in both chambers
- According to the **Michigan Department of Technology, Management and Budget (DTMB)**, Michigan is ranked 19th in the country in terms of the total number of people working within the state that have a minimum of a bachelor’s degree
- **Governor Rick Snyder** finished his latest trade mission to **Italy, France** and **Germany** late last week, noting the trip was successful in building interest with **European** companies in Michigan for business expansion
- The **State Emergency Operations Center** was activated last week for the counties of **Isabella, Bay, Midland** and **Gladwin** due to severe flooding resulting from heavy rainfall
- **House Speaker Tom Leonard** (R-DeWitt Twp) and **Governor Rick Snyder** are set to meet on July 11 to finalize any remaining budgetary issues, with the bills still in the **Secretary of the Senate’s** office for review
- The **Michigan Department of Corrections (MDOC)** announced its bid for a new computer system, with proposals due by July 14
- **Matt Mika**, the former Michigan legislative aid and current congressional staffer injured in the congressional softball practice shooting, was released from the hospital late last week
- **Senate Bill 286** unanimously passed the **Senate** last week Thursday, calling for the allowance of out of state **Certified Nursing Assistants (CNAs)** to work in Michigan
- **House** and **Senate** members will return for two more session days throughout the summer: July 12 and August 16

- According to a *Capitol* news source’s analysis, the average legislative experience level of current *House* members is 1.62 years and 9.3 years for current *Senate* members
- The *Michigan State University Institute for Public Policy and Social Research* held a two-day seminar beginning on Monday, designed to train legislative staffers
- Under new policy changes made by *State Superintendent Brian Whiston*, career and technology instructors will be certified for up to 10 years to assist students in vocational education
- More than \$120 million in additional funds have been allocated to school districts with large numbers of “at-risk” students for the *2017-2018 Fiscal Year*, something the *Middle Cities Education Association* praised
- According to a report released by *Auditor General Doug Ringler*, the *Michigan Statewide Automated Child Welfare Information System (MiSACWIS)* was not efficiently implemented as it was found to have potentially paid providers multiple times and did not notify providers of said overpayments (the report also noted that 56 percent of *MiSACWIS* users are not satisfied with the system)
- According to a poll conducted by *Denno Research* and *Resch Strategies*, 78 percent of Lansing pundits stated the proposal for a part-time legislature would have popular support, while 9 percent stated it would fail on the ballot
- New business expansions in *Detroit* and mid-Michigan, as approved by the *Strategic Fund*, are expected to generate roughly \$560 million in total capital investment and create 2,821 jobs
- The tolling period for medical malpractice cases begins the day after the notice of intent to sue is filed, according to a unanimous decision made Tuesday by the *Michigan Supreme Court*
- The *Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ)* announced *Hillsdale, Dundee, Burton* and *Ann Arbor* are set to receive loans for multiple water and sewer improvements, with the loans totaling \$14 million
- The *Michigan State Administrative Board* approved a \$4 million one-year extension on multiple special assistance *Attorney General* contracts for the *Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ)* to cover lawsuits against current and former employees involved in the *Flint Water Crisis* (the total amount allocated is now \$8.5 million)
- The national “*Helmets to Hardhats*” veteran employment initiative is set to receive \$200,000 in funding in *Fiscal Year 2017-2018* via the *Workforce and Talent Development* budget
- The *Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ)* filed a lawsuit against the *City of Flint* in federal court on Wednesday, asking for an order to the *City* to remain on the *Detroit* water system indefinitely (the *City Council* approved a short-term contract to remain on that system only until September 30)
- The *Michigan Supreme Court* ruled on Wednesday that charitable programs do not need to be free or available on a “first come/first serve” basis in order to gain eligibility for property tax exemptions
- *Governor Rick Snyder* signed *House Bill 4013* into law on Wednesday, calling for the allowance of Michigan drivers to show proof of registration electronically during traffic stops
- *House Bill 4169* has been sent to *Governor Rick Snyder* for signature, with the legislation calling for the prohibition of issuing a liquor license within 500 feet of a church or school and the extension of an exemption for licenses issued or renewed before a designated date
- According to state reports, the total amount spent on *Governor Rick Snyder’s* legal defense in regard to the *Flint Water Crisis* equals roughly \$4.47 million, and \$4.2 million has been spent on *Attorney General Bill Schuette’s* investigation into the *Crisis*
- The *City of Detroit’s* unemployment rate dropped to 7.5 percent in May, the city’s lowest rate in 17 years, according to the *U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics*
- *Governor Rick Snyder* announced today the *School Reform Office (SRO)* will be moved back to the *Michigan Department of Education (MDE)* reversing his 2015 decision that moved the *SRO* to the *Michigan Department of Technology, Management and Budget (DTMB)*

- **Senator Mike Kowall** (R-White Lake) stated on Thursday that the **U.S. Department of Transportation** is using Michigan's language in regard to autonomous vehicles to form federal legislation
- The **Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)** granted **Governor Rick Snyder's** request for a preliminary damage assessment with local and state officials in **Gladwin, Bay, Isabella** and **Midland** counties to review damage caused by recent flooding
- **Senate Bill 401**, part of the **Michigan Public School Employees Retirement System (MPERS)** reform, was sent to **Governor Rick Snyder** on Thursday for signature
- **House Bill 4427** was sent to **Governor Rick Snyder** for signature on Thursday, calling for the prohibition of the release of police body camera footage in certain circumstances
- A package of bills dealing with liquor, beer and wine issues was sent to **Governor Rick Snyder** for signature on Thursday: **House Bills 4556-4559**, calling for increased sentencing and penalties for the unlawful sale, delivery or importation of beer and wine as well as outlining regulation for liquor displays

PLEASE NOTE: **MHSA** will be close on Monday, July 3 and Tuesday, July 4, and will re-open for normal business hours on Wednesday, July 5. Please contact a member of the **MHSA** team with any questions or concerns. We wish you all a safe and happy holiday weekend!

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